

Title	Open Data and Knowledge Application
Organizer	Cross River State Department of Forestry, Biodiversity, Marine Protection and Conservation (CRS)
Type of event	Workshop; Discussion forum; Plenary
Venue	Room 207
Date/Time	Friday, June 21; 11:00-12:30
Event description	
<p>Open data can lead to impact beyond business innovation and should therefore not be seen as an economic resource only. Data are the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability. Without high-quality data providing the right information on the right things at the right time; designing, monitoring and evaluating effective policies becomes almost impossible.” In the region, the basic building blocks for successful open data programmes are largely in place in the majority of countries. However, data quality remains a challenge making it difficult for users to work with the data they are able to access. Strategies that emphasise quick wins by releasing a large number of low-quality data are shortsighted. Governments in the region need to go beyond the hype and invest in data management practice and appropriate legal frameworks, including right to information laws, to lay the foundation for an enabling environment that allows for meaningful participation of civil society and the private sector in open data. Capacity-building could also empower civil society to defend political and civil liberties and advocate for strong freedom of information laws and appropriate implementation mechanisms. For open data to result in political and social impact, data on land ownership, legislation, elections, company ownership and more should be made proactively available to the public online, free of charge, in machine-readable formats and openly licensed. There is no prescribed model for open data to succeed, nor just one single pathway that leads to success. Countries need to find context-appropriate solutions taking into account a country’s resources, capacities and realities when investing in open data readiness and implementation. Open data remains a young field that continues to grow. Systematic experimentation, evaluation and learning, especially at the subnational level, to inform policies and practice can enable countries to reap the full benefits of open data. Using pilots at the local level will maximise impact for citizens, and allow successful approaches to be scaled and replicated.</p>	